

DRAFT

MINUTES

**CITY OF IMPERIAL BEACH
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD COMMITTEE**

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD OF
THE CITY OF IMPERIAL BEACH
City Council Chambers
825 Imperial Beach Blvd.
Imperial Beach, CA 91932**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2011

4:00 P.M.

In accordance with City policy, all Design Review Board meetings are recorded on tape in their entirety and the tapes are available for review in the City of Imperial Beach, City Clerk's Office. These minutes are a brief summary of action taken.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR NAKAWATASE called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

BOARD MEMBERS:

Shirley Nakawatase - Chair
Janet Bowman
Daniel Lopez
Harold Phelps
Tom Schaaf

PRESENT: Nakawatase, Bowman, Lopez, Phelps, Schaaf

ABSENT: None

**STAFF PRESENT: Greg Wade, Director Community Development
Tyler Foltz, Associate Planner
Tina Barclay, Recording Secretary**

2.0 CONSENT CALENDAR

VOTE TO APPROVE CONSENT CALENDAR ITEM NO. 2.1.

July 21, 2011 Meeting:

**AYES: Nakawatase, Bowman, Lopez, Phelps
ABSTAIN: Schaaf
NOES: None
ABSENT: None**

ITEM#2.0

September 15, 2011 Meeting

AYES: Nakawatase, Bowman, Schaaf
ABSTAIN: Lopez, Phelps
NOES: None
ABSENT: None

3.0 BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

4.0 BUSINESS FROM THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

4.1 DESIGN REVIEW BOARD HEARING: SUDBERRY DEVELOPMENT (APPLICANT); ADMINISTRATIVE COASTAL PERMIT (ACP 110024), DESIGN REVIEW CASE (DRC 110025), SITE PLAN REVIEW (SPR 110026), TENTATIVE MAP (TM 110027), AND MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (EIA 1100228) TO CONSTRUCT A NEW COMMERCIAL CENTER THAT WOULD LOCATE ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF STATE ROUTE 75/PALM AVENUE BETWEEN 9TH AND 7TH STREETS, IN THE C-1 (GENERAL COMMERCIAL) ZONE. MF 1062.

Staff Report:

Foltz: This project will consist of 7 new commercial buildings. C-1 Commercial Zone. Existing site and buildings shown and will be demolished. 5 buildings along northern property line, Building A – market. Buildings B, C & D – retail, G – financial, E & F- retail. Ingress and egress – 4 entry points – 9th St., Palm/75 entrance and exit off of alley and entrance and exit off Palm near 7th. Trucks enter off of 9th street into loading areas. Plaza area between Buildings C and D. Primary point for those accessing retail shops and area for pedestrians to visit. 12 access points along alley for pedestrian access. New landscaping throughout site and new basin area. 4 trash enclosures.

Site shown from Palm avenue. Floor plans shown. Color elevations shown for the various buildings. North elevations, B,C & D shown. Material on buildings shown. Color elevations shown for F & G and Building E. Drop from alley to project site 7-8 feet and shorter. Conceptual landscape plan shown. Basin garden area as well. Bird of Paradise, Hawthorne, Plumb – variety of shrubs and trees. A rendering of the plaza area shown. Proposed public art on wall, and a water feature. Signage – 2 monuments signs – near bldg G and between A & B and directional signs near 9th and 7th. Gateway display between C and D. Aluminum frame structure and illuminated at night. Directional signs also 5 feet tall. Sign program – variety of signs – limited to types of signs they could do. Examples of signage allowed. Variety of stipulations and regulations. Conditions of approval for the project should it be approved.

Staff recommends that project incorporate a unique and distinctive public space and architectural statement at the corner of 9th Street and Palm Avenue. Staff recommends a contiguous sidewalk.

Wade: Working on Development Agreement – complex deal – things change daily. Time considerations due to State Redevelopment funds. Also, to get deal done and moving forward. Design elements, some will be staff recommendations but still want input from DRB. Crosswalk issue has not been fully resolved. Recommendations, not finalized. Want your input. Design specifics such as the basin area – importance of treating storm water. This has not been finalized. Will become a condition of approval. Alley – also expect refined drawings too. Site plan – access points – to minimize curb cuts and be more traffic friendly will be combined for access off of 9th Street. Access point on SR75 was a big issue with Caltrans. Still in discussions with engineer about best way to do crosswalk.

Questions to Staff/Applicant:

Phelps: Deadline – entitlement – could it be possible that Council approve project without site plan being finalized? Something that needs to be refined, and still come back and not lose out on funding?

Wade: Objective to approve site plan as proposed. Essentially, this configuration with conditions. of approval that call out specific elements that we'll continue to refine. Not uncommon for projects, particularly with development agreement, to approve at a basic concept level. Then that design is refined when moved towards building permits. Part of approval but conditioned upon specific items that we would continue to refine as we move forward to building permits.

Phelps: Generally the site plan that we see now, but not down to specific measurements? Where everything is located? Number of buildings, that can get us to where we need to be.

Wade: Yes – anything substantive to this site plan can come back for review. Enough flexibility to allow for that refinement.

Lopez: 9th street access – can you turn left and right?

Wade: Yes, Hank Levien is going to bid for resurfacing and going to recommend removing median so you can turn both ways.

Lopez: Like that better than straight alley access all the way through. Locals who live in this area can get into this site. Like idea of pedestrian between G & D to have closer inline of current proposed sidewalks. Straight thru shot going down sidewalk. Cars turning into facility coming down off Old Palm, will give them a little bit longer to slow down before getting to pedestrian walk. Highly propose move pedestrian walk closer to buildings. Building A – sharp corner at the corner – would like to see softer pedestrian edge.

Wade: Actually that has been rounded. Staff thinks more can be done, but current footprint will be rounded on that edge.

Lopez: Site plan – overall – like it.

Schaaf: Colors – are these the color schemes they are proposing?

Wade: Yes

Schaaf: Good – like it don't want to be surprised. Signage – is this what is proposed?

Wade: Will be tenant driven but will fit into comprehensive sign plan.

Bowman: Does retail space include any restaurants or eating facilities?

Wade: Desire for restaurant use, no specific tenant inked into a deal yet.

Bowman: Like plaza area and seating – but if we want people to hang around will there be public restrooms? Don't think these facilities will provide restrooms.

Wade: As far as I know, no public restrooms. Some tenants provide restrooms for their customers. Applicant may want to address that.

Lopez: Retention area – deepened ?

Wade: Bio Swale

Lopez: How deep

Wade: I think two feet at the most.

Questions to Staff: Closed:

Public Comments:

Estean Leyon – Director of Urban Redevelopment – Sudberry Properties 5465 Morehouse Drive, San Diego, CA

Team here today -- landscape architect, architect, consultants, engineering and grocery expertise. Here to answer any questions you may have. Have enjoyed the working relationship with the City so far. Took a long time to reconfigure SR75. Appreciate comments. Trying to meet needs of the City.

Phelps: How do you respond to staff concerns for unique public space at the corner, architectural statement at the corner, pedestrian orientation for the corner. Market building. What was the concept and rationale for putting market on corner since there are so many restraints that a market has?

Andy Stephenson – Architect

Evolution of site plan – took long time. With this type of project – potentially two anchors. Only do it effectively with smaller stores and pedestrian area. There are challenges dealing with edge buildings – discussion relative to corner ongoing. Don't think final conclusion to how to deal with that corner has been reached, but are sensitive to issues, needs. Will become a condition over time.

Phelps: Basically it's an anchor.

Stephenson: Chasing a significant tenant they will require being on corner for visibility/prominence.

Phelps: Ongoing discussions how to provide pedestrian refuge at corner – entrance – is that prohibitive to market?

Stephenson: Worked with many markets in retail settings. They are very formula driven – front door has to be off parking lot – shopping carts, in and out and parking – real world like downtown entrances on corners. Won't be workable in this situation because they have to have control where their cash registers are, etc. Can't split that on a facility of this size.

Phelps: Arch landmark feature – statement – how are those discussions going?

Wade: One way they are working that – rounding that edge, possibly a roof line treatment, may include some signage. Concepts we have been talking about. Have made an acknowledgement by rounding that street wall and that corner/edge. Still will be a window. Anchor location – little bit of history – staff recommendation – bring to street wall – move away from the residential. Regardless of tenant, will run into challenges. Inherent sort of challenge. What can we do to improve upon it?

Lopez: Piggy back on aesthetic – pretty prominent corner – pedestrian – how does that work? Are we trying to force them to come into site or force them along street and into courtyard?

Stephenson: Two different ways –after reconfiguration. Some pedestrians will stay along street also made it easy for pedestrians to move east/west within the project area. All have opportunities to connect to the south. Pedestrian's movement are pretty significant and a great deal of thought put in to it.

Phelps: Any thought about 9th Street crossing over to the parking field that's directly west of the service drive so that it doesn't just die in the parking area and then it would actually connect to Building E?

Stephenson: Connecting them at Building A. Minor connection – southeast corner at Building A – reason is exit door coming out of Building A – little sidewalk for pedestrians but also for hand trucks for market. Not really intended for pedestrian area. ADA issues.

Phelps: Won't be able to prevent pedestrian traffic – should discuss it more.

Bowman: Agree – going to have pedestrians coming in that way.

Stephenson: It's not a disabled access due to the slope of 9th. Grade change from corner. Difficult to make it into an access point. Though there will be people who can use the stairs.

Phelps: You could wipe out 15 stalls.

Stephenson: Parking ratios become tenant driven more so than zoning requirements.

Phelps: Safety issues?

Wade: No, no raised issues in respect to the parking.

Bowman: A lot of people who use motorized wheelchairs and can see an issue. Question regarding access point from the west of Building F – connector seems to be a really sharp turn – can that be made better? Wondering about the sidewalk there – existing sidewalk right in front of the property that says not a park, why wouldn't we bring that sidewalk straight across.

Wade: Objective to bring that sidewalk to a contiguous sidewalk. Adjacent to curb gutter and then the traveled way. Yes, a property line, access point is fixed in terms of the drive aisle. We can take back to their civil engineer and see if we can work on it. Don't view as problematic. Another driveway to the west of it, we would just have to make sure that coordinates well. Comment that can be looked at. Cannot say absolutely can make turn less of a sharp angle.

Bowman: Do we have a picture of Palm Ave area as it is today?

Phelps: Where is proposed plaza in the aerial of existing project facing? What am I looking at when I'm in the proposed plaza.

Wade: Looking across the street roughly in the location of CVS. A little bit to the east of the service area.

Bowman: Coming off 75 –triangle area. Existing median?

Wade: The other thing that I didn't mention in site plan. That through street area is going away and will merge. Partial relinquishment from CalTrans so now City right of way.

Bowman: The part where you make the left off of SR75, currently one way, now going to be two way? With lights? Pedestrian crossing?

Wade: Lights, but no crossing at Triangle Park. Crossing at 7th Street and 9th Street. Only two access points across SR75. Cross walk at 9th Street north to south, working on improving and enhancing it. Bulb outs cannot be implemented but investigating a median refuge. In conversation with Caltrans about that element. Not sure we can implement it – six feet minimum but could go to 4 feet. Lane widths would have to squeeze too small if 6 feet. Objective is to provide pedestrian safety enhancement.

Lopez: Not sure would like to see pedestrians crossing there anyway, turning radius you get into Old Palm Ave and north side of Imperial Beach and want that traffic to go through. At 9th & Palm would like to see four foot refuge.

Bowman: Currently two lanes to turn – will that go down to one?

Wade: Two lanes, with left lane will also be able to U turn.

Bowman: Redline across the center – any significance?

Wade: No – overlay of sewer line.

Schaaf: People coming south across Palm – in the middle people get stuck –

Wade: Yes, issue I was addressing – put a refuge in to make it easier to get stuck.

Bowman: Public restrooms? Any thought of that?

Estein: Public restrooms – our thinking is potential tenants around plaza will have their own restrooms. Don't usually think of it – not sure if it's a good idea because it could cause loitering for too long, wrong element.

Nakawatase: Grocery store, fast food potential – they will have a restroom.

Estein: Majority of centers around want plaza to be attractive for clientele – might not work to your favor to have public restrooms.

Nakawatase: We have discouraged it in our parks – took them down to barebones – prohibitive cost and maintaining them. \$250,000.00 per year to maintain port plaza restrooms.. No more doors because people were swinging off of them and broke. Don't see a large amount of space for rental, when you put something like that in could raise rents.

Schaaf: What is schedule of Phase 1 and Phase 2

Estein: Move as fast as possible. Construction drawings and depending on commitment from tenants. Expedite to get tenants in. Changing economic times we need to move forward quickly.

Bowman: Permanent bike racks at either end?

Stephenson: I would assume it will become a condition. There is a lot of bike traffic in IB and would be desirable to have several.

Public comment closed

Discussion

Nakawatase: Time is not our friend. If going to accept with conditions or as is, strongly suggest not coming back.

Phelps: Would like more elaboration from as to what would happen if goes to Council, to be entitled but still come back to us for a second review of all the refinement because I don't feel this a finished site plan. Don't think it behooves us to just accept what we have seen today and hope that conditions are applied. If council sees it and maybe they do or don't apply conditions.

Nakawatase: We are currently in discussion amongst ourselves. If you feel strongly, put in conditions, put it in a motion. I'm not saying everything gets set in stone. I would like to see site plan move forward – smaller issues such as color, landscaping, corner of building. Corner of building, minor points, and can put it in as a condition of the building. Far better to give what we can to approve and move forward. This is an exquisite design. I think it's wonderful. Little issues, not wild about sign, but can look at better.

Phelps: 7 buildings and x amount of square footage. Can it come back and we can massage it a little bit. Such as sidewalk condition, architectural landmark, if there is no way to relocate this market, which I think personally I would find it very easy to market Building A even down where Building C or D are and get more visibility and actually see the entrance. And then have the plaza with the corner, diagonal promenade. That would be a great design.

Nakawatase: We saw this already – we had the opportunity to make recommendations then.

Phelps: Did we? I don't remember seeing this site plan.

Nakawatase: Yes we did. These were the type of recommendations they were looking for then. I agree, would have been really really nice, but not willing to have it go back at this time – we are far too along to getting this approved. If Sacramento wasn't tightening up their purse strings....for us to extract money from them is getting incredibly difficult.

Phelps: We'll ask that question and see if that is impacted at all at seeing this site plan come back again.

Nakawatase: If we're looking at the conditions, can we as a board come together and say these are the conditions we are looking at, that we would like to have in XYZ format or brought back to us. Have a tacit approval to move forward, get this to Council and move forward so that the redevelopment funds can be released from Sacramento coffers and given to us.

Schaaf: I am in favor of getting this moved forward – less than a year with conceptual drawing with Building A there –some of B and C somewhat changed, but A was there, we voiced concerns but understood needed to get a tenant. We as a group said that is okay. We really need to go ahead – it may get too late if we don't go forward with this. I don't like the point (on building), hope it does curve. They have said they have incorporated a curved corner. The little window in front not necessary, but don't want to stop the project on this. Move forward and be informed if there is a major change.

Phelps: You are saying it would be worthwhile to see how they refine the design?

Schaaf: Would like to see it refined, but don't want to stipulate that we have to see it before going ahead. Would like to be informed. Needs to go forward.

Phelps: Let's ask that question, if it does or doesn't affect redevelopment funds. Whether or not the DRB says they do or don't want to see it again, if Council approves it. In general, the entire DDA and it still came back to DRB, if that was possible.

Schaaf: Let's open it back up to staff and ask that question.

Wade: May have alluded to it before. Entirely in the realm of possibility. Absolutely can be done. What we're approving with this entitlement is that the project comply with the overall objective of this site plan. In concept that it gets approved with this configuration and design and there are going to be specific elements that will attach as conditions of approval that need refinement. If DRB would like to see how they are or are not refined, we can absolutely bring that back to you in any stage and you can comment.

Phelps: Minor refinements won't affect the funding per the project that you're trying to get expedite?.

Wade: We have the funds; we're very much interested in getting a deal that allocates those funds to this project. That's what we're after at this point.

Bowman: Need to summarize those conditions that we want.

Nakawatase: This is what I am hearing so far. We want a Curved elevation on northeast building A.

Phelps: I would like to leave it more open to address it to more what the staff concerns were – what kind of public space can be created, architectural landmark, let the architect come up with a design solution doesn't necessarily what they are working on right now, could be something new, but needs to address those concerns brought up in staff report. We are all in a agreement that they have to be addresses. Similar to what they did across street at Union Bank, or diagonal refuge, a tower element, those are things that I don't think we've gotten anything concrete yet, but at least leave it open for them to think about those things. Curb element, sphere. Precisely go with what the staff report says.

Nakawatase: Then we're not putting any conditions on.

Phelps: We're being told by staff report to condition approval and maybe that's a way of immortalizing what staff put in their report. That we agree that those concerns need to be addressed. Make them official conditions and they can bring that back to us.

Nakawatase: What I heard from staff, between Building G & D – pedestrian walkway, abutting Palm Ave that it get moved south more in line with the existing. Would you like that as a condition of approval.

Lopez: Go back to previous site plan – and this could still be part of the overall plan, out of curiosity, any thought of moving D & C over to the west of G to make that plaza and have view to basin and buffer zone? Don't want a master change, just to have that buffer and have it closer to Old Palm Avenue and those pedestrians coming from that area and in line with walkway. Retention area would be a buffer.

Nakawatase: We have the buffer with the landscaping.

Schaaf: That would be a major change of a footprint.

Lopez: I am totally and completely in favor of plan the way it is. I've gone through the 2 or 3 year process with all the public hearings.

Nakawatase: What I am hearing is that we're willing to approve project as submitted with condition moving pedestrian walkway to south elevation between Buildings G & D and to soften the northeast elevation of Building A.

Phelps: Address public space created at corner, architectural statement and pedestrian orientation at the corner. Public space that should be created at the corner. That's three things that have to be created there. Public space, architectural statement and pedestrian orientation.

Schaaf: I think that's a good summary.

Bowman: Should have a condition to consider pedestrian thoroughfare somewhere on the south side.

Nakawatase: I don't find that necessary. Will impact parking and it's residential.

Phelps: Site plan review should soften or create a better solution to that because clearly people are going to go into the center through that driveway. I would hate for pedestrians use driveway instead of having their own sidewalk.

Bowman: I didn't mean the alley, I meant coming in off that truck access off of 9th Street. Having some pedestrian way. I think we have a number of handicapped people with motorized wheelchair.

Nakawatase: I think pedestrian access has been well addressed.

Lopez: This is mitigated by mere fact if the softening of corner at 9th & Palm – they will motorize up and come around. Not inconvenient to motorize 100 feet.

Phelps: They will use the driveway. Another disappointment if doesn't get addressed.

Bowman: Can we look at this without the step?

Nakawatase: This will have to become ADA approved

Phelps: You're saying parking is more important, we don't need parking but we're being told we need it for tenant needs.

Lopez: Unless you did a retaining wall on both sides of a ramp. That's engineering.

Nakawatase: I have as conditions of approval to soften the elevation on the northeast corner of Building A, better utilization of public space and architectural – what was it you said Harold?

Phelps: Address the public space component, the architectural statement component and the pedestrian orientation of the corner.

Nakawatase: Want to keep separate and distinct enough so they are not passed over. Soften the elevation the northeast corner of Building A to address the public space and the usage of architectural statement in that same corner -

Phelps: Pedestrian orientation.

Nakawatase: Public works will insist on ADA – trying to make this as clear cut as possible, the condition being to soften the elevation on the northeast corner of Building A, addressing the public space usage and architectural statement and to examine pedestrian usage. The second condition of approval that the pedestrian walkway between Bldg D & G be moved to the south elevation to the sidewalk already in existence. Pedestrian walkway which is now

abutting Hwy 75 and Palm Ave it's moved south to run in between D and G on the south elevation. The third, not a condition but a recommendation to look at an alternative pedestrian entryway on the southeast corner of the entrance which was formerly the alley access. Not a condition, just a request to look. Also a recommendation to soften west vehicular entrance.

Phelps: Two conditions and 2 recommendations – do we want to say to bring it back in 2 or 3 months.

Lopez: Leave it to staff to determine when it is more refined on these conditions and recommendations.

Nakawatase: At this point, we're letting go of it, go forward with a couple of conditions. Conditions are stated by us. If it comes back to us, it doesn't go back to Council.

Lopez: To summarize, we're just asking for an update to be determined by staff.

Phelps: Does the code prohibit the Council seeing anything without a final approval by the DRB?

Wade: As far as I understand, the DRB is advisory so there shouldn't be anything to be prohibitive.

Phelps: Precisely what I'm saying. I think that they can come back to us even after they get entitled by the City Council. Still working on site plan and we can look at this and give our final approval when they come back and show us how they are addressing these issues.

Lopez: I don't think the work is approval....just looking for an update at that point. They are going to take care –

Phelps: They don't need our final approval –

Nakawatase: I would put in after 4th recommendation, conditions and recommendations will be updated at staff's discretion.

Bowman: If the word is updated, does that mean we have no more input?

Phelps: What's the point of bringing it back if we can't tweak something?

Lopez: This is probably better explained by Greg, but there are things that are already stipulated in the staff report that will come back to us such as signage.

Schaaf: We're saying, go ahead with our recommendations.

Phelps: So we're not going to have any input in what they bring back.

Wade: The authority of DRB, it's advisory to the City Council, we will take your recommendations to the City Council as long as they are compatible with staff, in this case they are, the Council will decide what they want as conditions of approval, which will probably include architectural design, relocation of sidewalk, if they do support these, and direct staff to come back with refinement, then you will see what we take back to City Council. If Council directs staff otherwise, then we may not be constrained or required to have the design modified. City Council has discretion to ignore staff and DRB, for lack of a better word. My guess is they won't, if they request design come back to them it will come back to you. If they don't, at staff's discretion we'd be happy to come back to you and show you the refinements that have been made at your direction or what the council decided upon at their meeting.

Phelps: To re-cap, if you went to Council and we wanted to continue this to date uncertain to see some of these conditions addresses, and two recommendations, that doesn't prevent you from going to a public hearing and have council approve project and they agree with us or decide to ignore our advisory role, they could decide to have DRB look at this a little more closely. So we don't have to approve it tonight. We're recommending a continuance.

Nakawatase: I didn't take it that way at all – asking for a continuance...Council is pretty respectful of what we ask.

Phelps: Does it stop the council from taking an action?

Wade: Staff's recommendation of approval of the project with staff conditions. If the Council agrees, and sufficient to modify those designs, and the council asks for that, then the design revisions will come back to DRB before they would go back to Council. If the recommendation of DRB, you are recommending as a condition of approval that these design modifications be brought back before the DRB, the Council will be so advised and they have discretion to say yes it should happen or no it won't happen.

Phelps: Sounds like we can go ahead and say we want to see these conditions addressed at a meeting in the future.

Nakawatase: Then we're still approving it

Phelps: Only those conditions and that the project will come back to us and how they achieved those conditions.

Motion by Tom Schaaf:

Motion to approve project so as to move forward with the following conditions and recommendations: **1st Condition:** Soften elevation of northeast corner of Bldg A, address public space usage and architectural statement and examine pedestrian usage. **2nd**

Condition of Approval: Pedestrian walkway moved south between D & G on the south elevation so one straight line. **3rd, Recommendation:** Look at alternative pedestrian entry way at southeast entrance, formerly alley access **4th Recommendation:** Soften west vehicular entrance. Conditions and recommendations will be updated to Board members at staff's determination

Second by Dan Lopez:

Discussion: None

AYES: Nakawatase, Bowman, Lopez, Phelps, Schaaf

ABSTAIN: None

NOES: None

ABSENT:

5.0 INFORMATIONAL ITEMS/REPORTS

None.

6.0 NEW BUSINESS: None

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

Chair Shirley Nakawatase adjourned the meeting at 5:29 p.m. on November 17, 2011.

Approved

Shirley Nakawatase, DRB Chairperson

Attest

Tina Barclay, Recording Secretary

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